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PINDARICS.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PINDARICS;

OR AN

Ode of Lamentation,

ADDRESSED TO

PETER PINDAR, ESQ. pseud [i.e. J. Wolcot.]

ON HIS

NIL ADMIRARI,

OR A

SMILE AT A BISHOP.

I'll grant; altho' he has much Wit,
He *grows* ſo ſhy of uſing it.

HUDIBRAS.

AND

A DISQUISITION

CONCERNING THE CRASIS OF PETER PINDAR's BLOOD,

AND

ITS EFFECTS UPON *HIS* LABOURS EXEMPLIFIED,

Twice can't I read *her* Labours FOR MY BLOOD.

PINDAR.

BATH:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY C. ROBBINS, BRIDGE-STREET, AND SOLD BY ALL THE BOOKSELLERS;—SOLD ALSO BY W. BROWN, BOOKSELLER, BRISTOL;
J. WALLIS, PATERNOSTER ROW, AND CADELL AND DAVIES, STRAND, LONDON.

1800.—Price 2s.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

THE author of the following ſtrictures confeſſes that he has been among the warmeſt admirers of many parts of Peter Pindar's works; they poſſeſſed an original, and he once thought, an *inexhauſtible* vein of humour; the keenneſs of the ſatire was much ſoftened by the playfulneſs of the manner, and the ſevereſt ſtrokes appeared to be ſo void of malignity, that in many caſes they ceaſed to offend, where they were known to be unmerited; his thoughts were lambent flames that played round their object without conſuming, or ſo much as *ſcorching* it.

Some of his later publications manifeſt too clearly that his rich fund begins rapidly to decreaſe; he treſpaſſes too frequently upon the indulgence of the public. Like a ſpoiled child, who has often been admired for his wit, he ſeems to think that *every thing* HE *ſays muſt be witty*, which tempts him to take liberties which have no connection with a *poetic licence*. But the laſt wanton unprovoked attack upon two very reſpectable characters, *deſerves*, as indeed it meets with the general indignation. Dull invective in varied phraſe runs

through

through the whole, unſupported by a ſingle fact to prove that the parties are proper objects of ſuch treatment, and without being enlivened by a ſingle ſtroke of wit, to excite either admiration or laughter. The only diſplay of ingenuity we can diſcover, conſiſts in the addreſs with which the author has made the bold and extravagant aſſertion, that *Miſs Hannah More is devoid of genius*, to run through ſo many verſes; but our admiration even of this talent, will be much abated by attending to the wretched artificies employed; ſuch as illiberal aſſertions, mean inſinuations, inſipid expletives, low ſimilies, jingling rhymes,

"Of words a deluge, and a drop of ſenſe."

Peter has however practiſed one ingenious device, contributing much more to his own eaſe than to the amuſement or information of the public: he has made his ſatire ſo general, that by far the greater part of it may be directed againſt *any* body or *every* body who has appeared in the character of an author. Excepting the encomium paid by the biſhop upon *Miſs Hannah's* works, and the witticiſm of the *fiddle*, there is not a ſingle reference in the whole of the three firſt odes to any particular ſubject, thought, or expreſſion; there are no indications that he has read her works *ſo much as once*, from any obſervations that he has made concerning them. Nay! by ſubſtituting *Pindar* or *Peter* for *Hannah*, and ſome other very trivial alterations, ſome of the beſt verſes in his *Smile at a Biſhop*, might with peculiar propriety be turned againſt himſelf. This ſummary mode of proceeding reminds us of country ſchoolmaſters, who

compoſe

compoſe love letters ready for ſale, which have nothing *perſonal* belonging to them excepting the *addreſs*.

The perſon of the lady and of the prelate, are alike unknown to the author of this little piece: but their *characters* are well known. Had he been totally unacquainted with their works, the mode of attack would have made ſtrong impreſſions in their favour. The argument is ſhort and concluſive. A man of Peter's diſpoſition would not have contented himſelf with general ſatire, could he have ſeized upon particular blemiſhes. Altho' this ſelfconſtituted *aſſay-maſter* pronounces,

"Oft by my Touchſtone have I tried the laſs,
"And ſee no ſhining mark of gold appear,"

yet as he has not given us ſpecimens of an *inferior metal*, we are not obliged to believe his report; and ſince Peter's touchſtone has not diſcovered any *lead* in his own verſes, where there is ſo large a quantity, we may juſtly doubt its efficacy when applied to the writings of others.

All ſatire ſhould certainly contain either truth, wit, or ſenſe. If an author can ſo contrive it as to unite the three, ſo much the better, both for him and for us. We too frequently allow the want of *truth* to paſs uncenſured; we can ſometime bear a little *nonſenſe*; but *wit* or *humour* have we muſt to ſupply the plac of the other requiſites, or ſatire is *vapidity* itſelf! Peter has frequently found means to eſcape them all; and we are ſurpriſed that his own adage,

" 'Tis ſaid that ſometimes SAGES play the fool,
" But when they ſtumble, with a *vengeance* ſtumble,"

did not ſuggeſt to him the poſſibility of a *wit's* being in the ſame predicament.

Perceiving the impotency of general cenſure, without a ſingle proof adduced that the parties deſerve it, the author of the preſent trifle has reſolved to purſue the contrary plan: he has reſolved not to bring a ſingle charge of vague invective, extravagant conceit, vulgar imagery, laboured verſification, crawling lines, drowſy thoughts, without placing competent evidence before the reader. Should theſe charges *not* be ſupported, he conſents to be immediately *poſted* in the place of the " Courtly Porteus;" if they *be*, he hopes that Peter, taking the hint, that

" People ſhould not run riot with *applauſe*,"

will in the future take more pains to *deſerve* it.

The

The very ſickly ſtate of Peter's wit, is a proper ſubject of lamentation and inquiry; and genuine ſympathy both with the patient and the public, will, it is hoped, render itſelf conſpicious, both in the *ode* and the *diſquiſition*.

ODE

TO

PETER PINDAR, Esq.

ON HIS

NIL ADMIRARI; or a SMILE at a BISHOP.

ARGUMENT.

Friendly apprehenſions entertained concerning Peter's Teeth—*Hints that a* Grin *is not ſo agreeable as a* Smile—*Benevolent concern for the decay of* Peter's Wit, *expreſſed in ſeveral very pretty Similies—Peter admoniſhed againſt Ingratitude—His Complaint that Miſs Hannah More has killed his Muſe allowed to be juſt—The Power of* Blood *to give great Strength to a weak Thought, exemplified.*

ALAS! great Pindar, art thou ſunk to this?
What, are thoſe teeth dropt out that us'd to bite?
Thy powers exhauſted; canſt thou only *hiſs*?
Is thy keen ſatire turn'd to rancorous ſpite?

A ſmile

A ſmile at biſhops is no deadly ſin ;
And ſome might ſtill *enjoy* a *pleaſant* ſtroke ;
But where's the *ſmile* ? we only ſee a *grin*,
And cudgel much too *heavy* for a *joke*.

Oft have we gaz'd at thine exuberant wit !
Oft haſt thou ſet the table in a roar !
But truly Peter this laſt rhyming fit,
Proves that thy muſe is panting at death's door.

Thy verſes oft inſpir'd us with delight,
Mounting on high, and blazing like a rocket !
But now they're ſinking into darkeſt night !
Juſt glimmering,—like a candle in a ſocket.

Once of thy genius, mortals had a dread ;
Both kings and prieſts did from thine arrrows ſhrink !
But now how feeble ! nay, ſome think 'tis *dead*,
Leaving a gooſe-quill in the blackeſt ink !

I tell thee Peter thou art much to blame ;
Againſt Miſs Hannah, why this frantic fit ?

'Tis

'Tis ſo ungrateful to abuſe that name,
The ſole ſupporter of thy tottering wit!

Without that name were bandied up and down,
As clowniſh ruſtics kick the paſſive ball;
Say poet, where's thy title to renown?
Truth muſt confeſs that thou haſt none at all.*

And has Miſs Hannah but a *ſoſo* lyre?
How, how! And has ſhe murdered *muſes nine?*
No wonder thou haſt loſt thy wonted fire!
Yes, yes great poet! ſhe has murdered thine!

* Peter muſt think that there is either wit or wiſdom in the repetition of the name of Miſs Hannah More; for it is repeated upwards of ſeventy times in a pamphlet that might be reduced to ſeventeen pages. That name is the very key-ſtone that keeps his verſes together. Without it they would crumble into nothing.

Twice I can't read thy verſes FOR MY BLOOD,
So very mawkiſh, not *ſublimely* ſad.
'Tis well thy life is ſo ſurpaſſing good;
To make amends for lines that are ſo *bad*.*

* The two laſt ſtanzas are an humble imitation of the following; the ſublimity of which at once,

" Inſpires AMBITION, and implants deſpair."

Indeed Miſs Hannah, has a ſoſo lyre!
So out of tune, ſhe murders all the nine!
She really playeth not with taſte and fire:
No!—Dr. Porteus! No!—Thou great divine!!!

Twice can't I read her labours,—FOR MY BLOOD!
So ſimply mawkiſh; ſo ſublimely ſad;
I own Miſs Hannah's *life* is very good;
But then her *verſe* and *proſe* are very *bad*.

DISQUISITION

DISQUISITION

Concerning the CRASIS *of Peter Pindar's* BLOOD.

" Twice I can't read her Labours FOR MY BLOOD."

THIS very important declaration introduced in ſo ſolemn and affecting a manner, renders it highly intereſtiug to inquire *what can there be in Peter's Blood* which thus prevents his reading Miſs Hannah More's works more than once?

It is well known that for ſome time it has not been in a *florid* ſtate, and his laſt odes indicate that it is of a *ſaturnine* caſt. But its floridneſs could have been no impediment. There would have been a perfect congeniality between *his* temperament, and *her* works; for, if there be any objection to this lady's ſtyle, it is that of being ſome what too florid.

Has

Has he a *plethora?* This is not improbable, ſince he has been feeding upon the Public, and baſking in the ſun-ſhine of popular applauſe ſo many years.

Now it is the property of this diſeaſe to create ſuch an *hebetude*, that the patient, after he has ſatisfied his curioſity, can ſeldom read the beſt compoſitions more than once. But then it generally takes away the diſpoſition to *write*; which does not appear to be the caſe with Peter. Tho' it muſt be acknowledged that if compelled or *impelled* to write, by any motive peculiarly *intereſting*, ſomething of a *drowſineſs* will ſhew itſelf in different parts of the performance:—which *does* appear to be the caſe with Peter.

But this ſuppoſition will not ſufficiently account for that particular *kind*, I ſay not *vein* of humour which pervades the whole of his laſt performance: many parts are obviouſly very *acrimonious*. There is every reaſon to think therefore that this plethoric habit is connnected with a deep tinge of the *atrabilarius* kind in his blood: and to this he may refer when he ſings

Twice can't I read her labours *for my Blood.*

The well known properties of this ſame *black bile* are to diſcolour the appearance of every thing that ſurrounds the patient; giving a jaundice hue to the faireſt objects. It creates a wonderful irritability of temper; rendering the ſubject peeviſh, jealous, envious, captious, cenſorious.—It frequently excites an ungovernable *pruritus ſcribendi*; tho' unfortunately it does not furniſh any other power than that of *dipping*

the

the ſen in gall. It depraves the taſte: ſo that the patient reliſhes nothing more than that mawkiſh bitterneſs which is continually in his own mouth. It is apt to affect the brain; greatly diſturbing the judgment; and it has ſuch a ſingular effect upon the optics, that every thing is ſeen through a *diſtorted* medium.

From theſe cauſes it proceeds that the patient ſo often miſtakes his own ſtudied perverſion of another perſon's language, for arch ſagacity; his ill nature for wit: flippancy for life and ſpirit; and groſs vulgarity for eaſy humour. It is needleſs to add that the *itch of writing* with which he is troubled, always indicates itſelf by an attempt at *ſatire*; and that the ſtrength of this ſatire conſiſts in magnifying ſmall blemiſhes into great defects; and where no particular fault can be found, the patient relieves himſelf by evacuating general invectives.

Theſe are ſome of the indications of a *bilious temperament* in an author. A curſory examination of Peter's *Nil Admirari*, or *Smile at a Biſhop*, will preſent us with ſo many pathological ſymptoms of the union of this diſeaſe with the habitual plethora, as not to leave us a moment's doubt concerning the particular ſtate of his blood.

The ſymptoms in Peter are ſuſceptible of *three* diviſions: ſometimes we find hebetude and ſpleen in nearly equal proportions; ſo that we can ſcarcely decide which predominates.

Sometimes we perceive a ſtrong predominance of *hebetude*: and this in various degrees. He is either faſt aſleep; or he appears half awake with

with very confuſed ideas; or he is troubled with a plethoric indolence and a general drowſineſs, which render him careleſs in the execution of that for which he ſeems moſt inclined. But finally we have at times the ſtrōngeſt indications of the prevalence of Black Bile; which rouzes him effectually from the lethargic ſtate.

The following may be conſidered as indications of the firſt: or an union of hebetude and ſpleen. In this ſtate Peter can ſometimes be very amuſing. The natural mildneſs of the plethoric temperament, ſoftens the acrimony of the bile; and the ſtimulating quality of the latter, corrects the inſipidity of the former; and thus more pleaſant effects are produced than Peter himſelf could have intended.

EXAMPLES.

1. Peter advances the ſingular opinion that *high tones* can alone be produced by a *fiddle*.

> "The cauſe of religion and *high-toned morality*, to uſe your "lordſhip's *fiddling* figure."
>
> See Addreſs to B. PORTEUS.

By giving this arch turn to his lordſhip's expreſſion, Peter entertains the conceit that he has been able to convert a venerable eccleſiaſtic into a *fiddler*, at a ſingle ſtroke. It was equally in his power to have made him

him an *organiſt*; but this would have appeared much leſs degrading. Beſides being determined to *lead the biſhop a dance*, he thought it highly neceſſary to provide a *fiddle*; and his predelection for that inſtrument induces him to imagine, that nothing can be productive of high tones but *catgut*.

2. Peter ſuggeſteth that the muſes keep a Curate, and that they ſometimes elect *biſhops* to that office.

" A biſhop may be no better than a poor curate among the " muſes.

Ibid.

The originality of this idea requires a comment. Had he advanced that the muſes were accuſtomed to keep a *jeſter* in their court, the poſition would immediately have gained credit; as it would have accounted for the whimſical ſtrain of Peter's beſt poety: but the ſuggeſtion that they *keep a curate* demands a pauſe.

Yet may we not admit of the fact? Some of them are of a ſerious turn, tho' others are ſo gay and lively. And may we not conjecture that, as Peter ſeemed once to have been a favourite of the muſes, and as he was once in holy orders, this honour had been conferred upon himſelf? For as he, with equal good nature and decency aſſerts that, " a biſhop may be an abſtemious or a *devouring* biſhop; a generous or an *avaricious* biſhop; a decent or an *in*decent biſhop; a believing or an *un*believing biſhop;

biſhop; a ſober or a *boozing* biſhop; a lazy or a *fox-hunting* biſhop;" there is no extravagance in ſuppoſing that a curate may ſometimes approach the character of *Miſter Merryman*.

It appears however from his laſt works that the muſes have totally diſcarded him. He would inſinuate that it was to make room for *Doctor Porteus*; tho' according to the character he has given of the Doctor's talents compared with his own, he never could deem them *muſes of taſte*.

But the truth is, a rumour prevails that he was diſmiſſed in conſequence of having *violated Euterpe*, the moſt buxom maid on the mount. That Peter has a fondneſs for *ſearching damſels o'er and o'er* is plain from the following declaration.

" Know I have ſearch'd the damſel o'er and o'er,
" And only find Miſs Hannah a GOOD *maid*."

Now tho' Miſs Hannah has thus happily eſcaped, it does not follow that he leaves every damſel as good a maid as he found her.

What gives ſtrength to this rumour is his quarrel with Apollo; who, as Euterpe was his favourite, muſt have been greatly offended at the inſult. Hence it is perhaps that Peter in a pettiſh humour, calls his quondam friend a blubberer.

" No PHOEBUS *blubber'd* for the loſs of ſong."

3. Some

3. Some remains of clerical language, united with his aiming at ſatire, have induced Peter to change the old proverb, *as an egg full of meat*, into *an egg full of faith and grace*.

" Tho' like an egg, ſo full of faith and grace."

4. Peter merely to caſt a ſlight upon the very birth place of *poor Hannah*, has unmercifully ſouſed all the natives of Briſtol in a *quagmire*.

" The humming native of the Briſtol pool."

Dear Peter, why doſt thou not call her *croaking* native, and turn her into a frog at once?

5. Our ſplenetic poet is very diſcontented that Miſs Hannah is not a *bonfire*.

" Miſs Hannah's graces dazzle not the view:
" No *bonfire* ſhe."

6. Peter being very evil minded both owards Dr. Porteus and Miſs More, calleth in the aid of father *Time* to do what he is conſcious *he* cannot do, render them both contemptible. For this purpoſe he has changed the old gentleman into a *varniſh Roaſter*.

" At length comes Time with TRUTH's pervading ray,
" To ſeperate the *living* from the *dead;*
" Clears the dark cloud of prejudice away;
" And roaſts the varniſh off by flattery ſpread.

" And lo this varniſh which thy daubing bruſh
" Smear'd o'er Miſs Hannah muſt by time be roaſted:
" The nymph in all her nakedneſs will bluſh,
" Aud Courtly Porteus for a flatterer poſted."

There is an originality in this thought, which deſerves our notice. A vulgar genius repreſents *Time* with his *hour-glaſs*, and *ſcythe*, ready, when their hour is come, to mow down the living and number them with the dead: Peter on the contrary has aſſigned to him the office, of *ſeperating* the one from the other. *Truth* is commonly repreſented as holding a *torch*, large enough to ſet a town on fire; Peter to prevent accidents, ſends Time to Truth, juſt to borrow a *ſingle ray*: which tho' potent enough to roaſt all the varniſh ſmear'd o'er Miſs Hannah, will ſome how or other be ſo modified, as not to bliſter her ſkin. The only pain ſuffered by the nymph will be that of bluſhing at her own nakedneſs.

7. Peter willing to ſhew the exceſs of his contempt of Miſs Hannah, condeſcends to rake ſtables for diſguſting and vulgar metaphors.

" Miſs

" Miſs Hannah's *heels* are GREASY, *let me ſay*!
" Miſs Hannah's JOINTS ARE VERY STIFF, *indeed!*
" Her form is rather fitted for a *dray*,
" Than on new-market turf to ſhew a ſpeed."

8. In his eagerneſs to have a peek at Miſs Hannah's *piteous carcaſe*, Peter very readily becometh a *crow*.

" To gibbet her amid the blaze of day,
" A *piteous carcaſe*, for the *critic crows*."

9. Peter attempteth to conſecrate his ſpleen by affecting to be very *religious*.

God Almighty only knows.

God ſees my heart!

Notwithſtanding the awful ſolemnity of theſe expreſſions; there are ſome who think them the moſt laughable parts of his poems.

10. In a ſtrong fit of arrogance Peter indulgeth the flattering conceit that he has more *judgments* than one; thus pouring the *oil of fools* into his own ear.

" *Know*

" *Know Porteus* we have women of renown
" Miſs Hannah's equals, or my judgments fail;
" Nay numbers:—*I aver it*—of whoſe gown,
" Miſs Hannah is not fit to hold the *tail.*"

The peculiar ſublimity of the laſt line has induced me to quote the whole verſe.

This Aſſuming ſtyle which perpetually occurs, ſhews that Peter's *ſelf-ſufficiencies* are as numerous as his judgments.*

The above dogmatical aſſertions of our great poet lead me to the *ſecond* diviſion: for ſtrange as it may appear, he is manifeſtly *talking in his ſleep.*

Peter in ſeveral parts of this ſtriking performance, has been laviſh of every degrading epithet, that his imagination, ſo remarkably fertile in this claſs of ideas, could poſſibly ſuggeſt. He has deſcribed the object of his invictive to be a " ſcanty rill;" " a ruſhlight;" yea, " a

*It has been alledged that Peter could not mean to be ſo arrogant; that judgments being in the plural number is to be aſcribed to an error of the preſs. But this kind apology cannot be valid; for judgment in the ſingular would have compelled Peter to write *fails*, and this would have compelled him to multiply the gown *tails* of each renowned lady. Pluralities therefore being abſolutely neceſſary ſomewhere, Peter wiſely takes the benefit to himſelf by multiplying his own judgments.

" *farthing*

"*farthing* ruſhlight;" "a poor ephemeron;" "a mole;" "a graſs-"hopper;" "a mouſe;" "a rat;" "a literary mite;" he declares that

"Miſs Hannah's verſe is *poor inſipid ſtuff*;"

and yet, with great pomp he pronounces,

KNOW Porteus, we have women of RENOWN,
Miſs Hannah's *equals!*

That is, theſe women of renown, Miſs Hannah's equals, are equally with her ſcanty rills, ruſhlights, poor ephemerons, and a parcel of moles, graſs-hoppers, mice, rats, and mites, and writers of inſipid ſtuff, altogether!

Are not theſe the reveries of a *ſomnambuliſt* who cannot *for his blood* get into the *luminous* criſis? Were not all Peter's judgments faſt aſleep at the ſame time? for if any one of them had been awake, it muſt have taught him to be leſs abſurd and more mannerly! Is it not plain that what Peter has gained in *quantity* he has loſt in *quality*, and that one good judgment is worth them all?

The following ſtanza exhibits Peter as ſuddenly ſtarting from a profound ſleep; tho' he is far from being quite awake. His ideas remain confuſed; and his eyes are ſo dim that he cannot ſee what he is about.

I'll

I'll tell thee, Porteus, WHAT! Miſs Hannah's ſtrictures
Are *decent* things; perhaps Miſs Hannah's *plan*.
But truſt me, they are all ſome *parſon's* pictures!
Theſe, Miſs Hannah never drew, nor coloured;—MAN!

Peter now thinks that he has made a very important diſcovery, which is, that a rill, ruſh-light, ephemeron, mole, graſs-hopper, mouſe, rat, mite, can write *decent ſtrictures*, and *form plan*; but cannot draw *pictures* nor *colour* them.

This diſcovery is uſhered in with more than ordinary pomp. He frequently adds *know*, *I aver*, let me *ſay*, and for two obvious purpoſes; the one to accommodate the metre, and the other to ſerve as ſtilts to his ſelf-importance;* but here he is peculiarly emphatical and peremptory. It is I confeſs a whimſical idea, but there is ſomething in the expreſſion which reſembles the very firſt ſtrut of a newly created ſerjeant!

I'll tell thee Porteus—*What!*

By this dead halt it is plain he thinks that he is going to ſay ſomething truely ſurpriſing: nor is he miſtaken. For we are ſurpriſed

* It is a ſingular and unrivalled advantage in Pindar's poetry, that ſuch a number of his expreſſions and of his rhymes can be put in and taken out at pleaſure, without the leaſt injury to the ſenſe.

at

at his inconſiſtencies, in allowing that a perſon whom he has treated as a reptile, ſhould poſſeſs a conſiderable ſhare of merit; and in daring to inſinuate, that the divine whom he has repreſented as totally void of taſte, and ſcarcely equal to a pun, has been able to *embelliſh* ſtrictures that were tolerably decent of themſelves!

The only excuſe that can be made for theſe inconſiſtencies is that all his judgments could not be perfectly awake at once. Theſe are obviouſly the firſt ideas of a man emerging from a profound ſlumber which always appear very important to himſelf, whatever they may do to others.

He is ſo pleaſed with the thought, that leſt it ſhould eſcape him, or ſomebody ſhould ſteal it, he has ſet the venerable Doctor at the end of the laſt line to watch it!

" Theſe, Miſs Hannah never drew nor coloured;—MAN!

Thus between, *I'll tell thee Porteus*, at the beginning, and *Man* at the end of it, the thought may reſt perfectly ſecure, that it will neither be borrowed nor ſtolen.

Peter's being ſcarcely awake, muſt alſo plead his apology for obſerving that Miſs Hannah's *plan* are decent *things*.

A *conceſſion* needs no proof; Peter therefore directs one of his judgments to defend the *inſinuation*, that Miſs Hannah has received aſſiſtance; by the aid of two ſimilies; the one compoſed of *hemp* and *flax*, and the other of *horſe-ſkin* and *calf-ſkin* ſtitched together.

At times ſhe finds of *hemp*, a little wad;
  Begs ſome young *Levite ſpin it*; nothing loth,
He adds, large quantities of *flax*: *kind lad*:
  And with the mixture fabricates the cloth!

Again; Miſs Hannah finds a ſcrap of leather;
  Horſe-ſkin: and ſlily to ſome criſpin goes:
Criſpin adds *Calf-ſkin*; puts them both together;
  And makes a tolerable pair of ſhoes.

Ah Peter! hadſt thou but borrowed a ſcrap of this ſcrap of leather to ſharpen thy wit upon, it might have cut a little better!

A perſon who begins to feel within himſelf ſome ſymptoms of intoxication, does his beſt to ſtand upright; and always attempts to keep a ſtrait line when he walks: thus Peter feeling himſelf ſtill drowſy, proceeds cautiouſly, endeavouring to grope his way ſtep by ſtep that he may move through both theſe ſimilies, without a ſingle *fauxpas*. But he cannot ſucceed.

Begs

Begs ſome young *Levite ſpin it!*

Here Peter finds himſelf embarraſſed. If he had ſaid *to ſpin it*, he muſt have ſtumbled againſt the metre: to avoid this he has ſtumbled againſt grammar.

Was Peter thoroughly awake when he ſet this young Levite to ſpin hemp? And not contented with this degradation of his office, unmercifully to expect that he ſhould *manufacture cloth* alſo! Surely Miſs Hannah could not be ſo unreaſonable! But he was a *kind lad!* That he was to *Peter*, not leſs than to Miſs Hannah: for being *nothing loth*, he has furniſhed a rhyme to *cloth*; and without this kind *lad* there would have been no rhyme to *wad*, and the whole of this beautiful ſimile muſt have been loſt!

The verſe following preſents us alſo with another inſtance of the extreme caution our ſleepy poet takes in deſcending from Parnaſſus. This, like the other is obviouſly made up of *ſtepping ſtones*, and *landing places!* It is a pity that Peter ever thought of turning ſuch harſh materials into *poetry*! He could with much greater eaſe have formed them

into a *gradus de parnaſſo:* and have made
ſcraps of leather
horſe-ſkin
criſpin
calf-ſkin
a pair of ſhoes;
ſteps of eaſy deſcent from the mount, down to the cobler's ſtall at the bottom of it!

Plethoric Indolence, or general Drowſineſs.

Tho' this ſubject is ſo copious it will not ſuffer amplification. No man can write a comment upon dullneſs, without growing dull himſelf. Peter's favourite poppies are plentifully ſpread over the whole work: and many of the quotations already given for other purpoſes, fully indicate a heavineſs which a ſplenetic humour itſelf cannot entirely ſhake off. There are other inſtances where he makes ineffectual attempts to be cheerful and ſome in which deep ſeated vanity is indulged with an air of jocularity, of which however his readers cannot participate. I ſhall ſave myſelf much trouble by referring the readers to the *poſtſcript* in which Peter undertakes to review his own works: to the *whole ode on the blue ſtocking club*: where they will ſee ſuch a large heap of theſe poppies collected together, as might ſerve for an apothecaries ſhop. Let them try to read that ode *twice* if they can, without falling aſleep.

In

In the ode termed *expoſtulation*, Peter attempts to vindicate the poets from the charge brought by Miſs Hannah of "being always ready to lend an helping hand when any miſchief is to be done." But he ſoon leaves

"The robin red-breaſt of the human race,"

to ſing by themſelves, and he demonſtrates that when

"Much for a poet's character he feels,"

the feeling is entirely confined to his own fame: which he expoſes to great danger by the *tame*, *vapid* manner in which he attempts to preſerve it.

"And *me* a poet, *Majeſty* will own;
"*Nay*, *nay*, my glory why ſhould I conceal?
"My works, morocco gilt, are near the *throne*."

This is intended for a pleaſant jeſt; and the intention is harmleſs, whether it be ſucceſsful or not. But he is ſo fond of this morocco binding, conſcious perhaps that it muſt add greatly to the value of his works, that he repeats it,

"Miſs Tryon, maid of honour to the queen,
"In rich *Morocco* bade my works be bound:

" Beneath the pillow of the *reſt*, I ween,
" The works of Peter Pindar may be found."

Thus our poet has found a proper place for them at laſt! If the *reſt* felt the ſoporific influence of the former volumes, they will doubly prize the preſent.

" Miſs Tryon, maid of honour to the Queen,"

has a ſublimity in it equal to

Lieutenant Colonel to the Earl of Marr!

I ween. It was ſcarcely neceſſary to tranſcribe this word. Peter never forgets his old friend *I ween*, whenever he can find a place for it. This preference it claims by the law of uſage, and long eſtabliſhed practice, and it muſt be peculiarly happy to be placed ſo near the Queen.

But who are the *reſt?* No other than

The charming Princeſſes, who court the *nine*,
Whom TASTE delighted proudly leads along.—
Theſe with a ſmile, have read my early line,
And with their names ſhall grace my lateſt ſong.

After this compliment neatly expreſſed, ought not Peter to have kept his

his promiſe with the charming Princeſs a little better?

" Beneath the pillow of the *reſt*; I ween!

Why this is huddling them together with leſs ceremony than is due to their chamber maids! Could he have treated *a neſt of kittens* more diſreſpectfully?

Peter to purſue his argument, farther informs us that his works amuſed *Kotſciuſko* when in priſon: and in that ſituation he might have been delighted with no *very high-toned fiddle*. But what was a more ſubſtantial proof, and much more ſatisfactory than empty praiſe; *Kotſciuſko* ſent our bard a preſent of *Falernian* wine: which conveys the ſuggeſtion that *he* was the *Horace*, and the Poliſh nobleman his *Mœcenas*.

Well; let us ſee how this *Falern* has inſpired our modern *Horace*.

" To him in Leiceſter-fields with joy I went!"

No one will doubt of Peter's joy upon this occaſion: but this languid line proves, that the joy had exhauſted his ſpirits; and that when he wrote it the *ſtimulating* power of the falern had given place to its *ſedative* effects. Did falernian wine inſpire the following?

" Some years ago, I ſaw a female race;
" The prize a ſhift,—A holland ſhift, *I ween*:"

" Now

" Now God preſerve the biſhops *every ſkin* !

" A *ſorry critic* thou in proſe or metre !

" All righteous cramm'd to mouth, with heavenly manna !

" Oh ! think of love ye ladies of hard hearts ;
" *Lo* nature weaves it cloſe in every CRANNY !"

As he had ſet the kind Levite about ſpinning and fabricating of cloth, ſo he now makes dame nature turn weaver. He might ſurely have found a little better place for her loom than a *cranny*, where ſhe will not be able to ſtir her elbows. Perhaps he thinks her ſomething of a ſpider ? But this cranny was wanted as a ſnug place for the *ſhaking granny* of the laſt line.

" The ſubject ſweet of many a ſhaking GRANNY !"*

" Yet let me ſay, be done fair juſtice too."

This line reader, is in page 38. It is neceſſary to mark the place, leaſt any one ſhould ſuſpect it to be a quotation from *Sternhold* and *Hopkins*. It is followed by

* Peter ſeems by his practice to entertain the idea that quaint rhymes conſtitute the very eſſence of doggerel verſe. But he is ſurely miſtaken. Their true value conſiſts in being a dreſs beſt adapted to comic thoughts and droll humour. The motly garb, will not give vivacity to a clumſy *Harlequin* ; nor will cap and bells with a few ſtudied grimaces conſtitute a *merry* fellow. Doggerel rhymes without ſpirit in the thought, appear in the compoſition before us, what they really are, the EXUVIAE of departed humour.

" Some

" Some damn *in toto* my poor thoughts and ſtyle."

Not in *toto* Peter, but *pro maxima parte.* Certainly Miſs Hannah has found her equal in *thee* as well as in women of renown, for ſuch lines prove that

PINDAR's works are *lame inſiped ſtuff!*

To conclude this head in the ſublimeſt ſtyle of Pindaric poetry,

I'll tell thee Pindar, what! Yes;—Let me ſay;
Lo! and behold! ſuch verſe is ſeldom ſeen;
Nay; I aver it:—Truſt me Peter, pray,
Really, indeed, it is soso;—*I ween!*

3. *Now for the prevalence of the* BLACK BILE.

The reader will find a certain quantity of it in the introductory addreſs. " A biſhop may be an abſtemious or a *devouring* biſhop," &c. he will find it in the following.

" Long were a biſhop's *tuſks* in times of yore,
" *His gaping gullet flam'd the track of hell!*

" No ſcorn now frowneth from a biſhop's eye,
" No ſound of anger from his lips eſcape;

" *Save*

" *Save on a* CURATE's *importuning ſigh,*
" *Save on the penury* of RAGGED CRAPE.

He will find it in the advertiſement prefixed to the ode, called *Expoſtulation.* " I have, unlike Miſs Hannah, preſerved *a Chriſtian ſpirit* on the occaſion, a ſpirit which ſhe every where ſo fervently recommends, and *meekly* made my complaint in poetical expoſtulation, hoping that ſhe will with the uſual aſſiſtance of her good friends the CLERGY, *vouchſafe me an anſwer, in ſome meaſure to juſtify the ſlander, or expunge it form the next edition of what are called* HER *ſtrictures on female education!*"

This does not ſound like the fiddle! It is more like *high-toned anger.* It approaches to a challenge: ſo terribly menacing are its looks! This is a *noli me tangere* of an irritated poet with a witneſs! But recollect Peter when your paſſion is over, that you have impoſed too difficult a taſk upon Miſs Hannah to require her to *juſtify* ſcandal. Scandal cannot be ſo eaſily juſtified. It is doubtful whether Peter could do it were to make the attempt. It is much eaſier to juſtify certain expreſſions by proving that they are *not* ſcandal; and yet Peter cannot always do this.

He will find it in the inſinuation that Miſs More's obſervations on the poets proceed from their having neglected to celebrate her charms.

For a large collection of gall, I refer the reader to the whole *Ode on Duplicity.*

He

He will find it alſo ſpread over the country cathedral, moſt diſguſtingly

" Tainted with ale, and gin, and eggs, and bacon!"

But theſe are comparative trifles.

As a gorged Leech however indolent it may appear when undiſturbed, if it be ſprinkled with ſalt, will throw up all the blood it has ſucked in, thus our *meek* poet being highly irritated, poureth forth the abundance of bile which he has been collecting.

" A *mouſe* ſhall ſtart the *lion* of the day,
" Witneſs that miſerable *imp*, Matthias!"

Pray is the *mouſe* the *imp*, or the *imp* the *mouſe?* But this is excuſable, when people are in a paſſion, they cannot attend to accuracy. To proceed,

" Behold this *human ſnake* and *human toad*,
" Sly mid the windings of his murky hole,
" Pour'd on the ſhrinking world his *poiſ'nous load*,
" And on the ſighs of MERIT fed his ſoul."

Nay Peter's gall runs over the verſe, down into the following note.

"*This poor little wretch*, whoſe pamphlets miſnomered *purſuits of literature*, but whoſe true appellation ſhould have been PURSUITS of RANCOUR, dared not acknowledge his own work. The enormity of its falſehood and impudence was quite a novelty, and in ſpite of its contemptible imbecillity gained the attention of the public. *This*, Matthias miſtook for *fame*: ſtill he denied any connexion with the pamphlet; every paltry ſubterfuge was made uſe of, to eſcape detection. At length a few *literary hounds* ſeriouſly purſued him, hunted him fairly to his hole, and put the VERMIN to death!"

This laſt ſpecimen is ſuch a full indication of the nature of the malady in Peter's blood, that there is no occaſion to proceed any farther.

Thus have we ſufficiently proved that the union of plethoric and bilious temperament to an high degree has induced upon poor Peter an habitual laſſitude, and inſuperable languor: has depraved his taſte, perverted his judgments, rendered him peeviſh, and moroſe, and ſometimes malignant.

Whether there be any hopes of recovery, time will ſhew. Among other remedies, the following ſeem to be peculiarly adapted to his caſe:

1. Abſtinence. His friend Shakeſpeare, that great phyſician of the mind, tells him,

Fat

Fat paunches have lean pates; and dainty bits
Make rich the ribs, but bankerout the wits.

2. Let him increaſe the intervals between his publication: His brains are obviouſly fatigued; they want reſt. Peter's thoughts at firſt flowed moſt copiouſly of themſelves; then with ſome little exertion: at length he has been obliged to pump hard; and hard pumping muſt be hard work. Let him remember that it is *truth* not *wit* that lies at the bottom of the well. Wit lies upon the ſurface, and if good for any thing, it comes at the firſt ſtroke. Wit flows at the top, and ſoon runs off. Truth will remain at the bottom, 'till we deſcend to pay our compliments to her; nothing remains therefore for the pumper but *mud*. Let him have patience 'till thoughts flow in of themſelves; they may in time, riſe above this mud and become as pure as the ſtreams of *Helicon*.

3. Should he feel his vigour reſtored, let him by all means change his ſubjects. Let him no longer ſelect diſtinguiſhed *merit*, but *vice* and *folly* as the objects of his ſatire. This would be a very great novelty to the public; much relieve his brain by directing his thoughts into a channel entirely new: and perhaps might inſpire him with a train of new and acceptable ideas.

PUBLISHED 6 NOV 73 SMITHSONIAN